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By DSR NARS Date 10/12/78 DEPARTMENT OF STATE
THE DIRECTOR OF INTELLIGENCE AND RESEARCH

TO : The Secretary
FROM: S/S
FROM : MR. - Thomas L. Hughes *TM*

APR 16 1963

RECORDED DATE: 8:45 AM, 10 APR 1963, BY RICHARD MARSHALL,
SOURCE INFORMATION

The US Air Attaché in Moscow relates a report that Marshals Koskelenko and Golikov had opposed the Cuban missile decisions in early 1962. As a result they suffered demotions in April and returned to favor in November. The "experienced Moscow observer" who was the source of the report further stated that Khrushchev made the Cuban missile decision and that it was definitely not imposed upon him by hard-line military men or a Presidium faction.

Partial Confirmation. This is the first intelligence report we have seen on the subject. We can confirm that the two Marshals mentioned were shifted from their positions last spring. Koskelenko was removed as chief of the Strategic Rocket Forces and became Chief Inspector of the Soviet Armed Forces. Golikov in May was removed as the chief political officer of the armed services because of ill health. However, their return to favor cannot be documented. Golikov, according to a Soviet protocol officer who reviewed the guest list for the US Armed Forces day reception, remains in poor health and would not be able to accept an invitation. Koskelenko was recently rumored to be due for a promotion, but we have not had any further news on that score.

GROUP 3
Downgraded at 12 year intervals;
not automatically declassified.

Thesis Plausible. We believe the thesis of the report to be generally plausible. Soviet military men, and the chief of the Strategic Rocket Forces in particular, may well have had reason to oppose the Cuban deployment on military grounds, while Khrushchev might have seen the venture as a cheap means of adding to Soviet ability to threaten the US.